



A shorter version of this article was originally published in the April 2007 Stages eNews.

Alternate assessments: what does your state require?

If you have used Stages Report Wizard, you know that it is a powerful tool for analyzing your saved Stages reports and showing learner progress over time. Stages Report Wizard creates graphs for accuracy, independence (number of prompts) and time on activity using data extracted from your saved Stages reports. It also displays a table that shows the specific content that the learner has mastered or needs to practice.

In many states, teachers submit a portfolio for each learner that requires an alternate assessment. Stages Report Wizard reports and activity summaries can often be used as is in these portfolios. But what if your state requires something different?

For example, Massachusetts requires a single graph or chart that includes both accuracy and independence, shown as percentages. The state has its own form, which it prefers that teachers use. How can teachers combine Stages data onto this form?

Let's look at sample data from 5 reports for the same activity in Stage 3. The activity for each date consists of three questions. How can we turn this data into percentages for accuracy and independence? (Note that some states may require data for a different number of sessions during the year.)

TIP -- To see the data in a saved report, double-click to open it in your computer's text editor or word processor. Or, launch Stages Report Wizard and select a learner and a report; then click the 'Annotate One Learner Report' button to view the data for that Stages activity.

	Sep 26	Nov 15	Feb 02	March 30	May 13
1 # tries:	3	2	2	1	1
correct?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# prompts:	3	0	0	0	0
2 # tries:	3	3	1	1	1
correct?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# prompts:	2	1	0	0	0
3 # tries:	3	2	2	2	1
correct:	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# prompts:	2	2	1	0	0

Stages Report Wizard considers a response to be accurate when the learner answers the question correctly on the first attempt. To provide learning support with meaningful feedback, many Stages activities give clues or remove incorrect answers to guide the learner to the correct answer. However, the learner has not mastered that skill until he or she knows the answer the first time the question is asked.

A learner shows independence when he or she responds without requiring a prompt.

Here is one approach to analyzing the data shown above:

- In September, the learner did not answer any question correctly on the first try (0 out of 3 correct = 0% accuracy); a prompt was required at each question (0 out of 3 with no prompt = 0% independence).
- In November, the learner did not answer any question correctly on the first try (0 out of 3 correct = 0% accuracy); she needed no prompt for one question (1 out of 3 with no prompt = 33% independence).
- In February, she answered one question out of 3 correctly on the first try (1 out of 3 correct = 33% accuracy); she needed no prompt for two questions (2 out of 3 with no prompt = 67% independence).
- In March, she answered 2 questions out of 3 correctly on the first try (2 out of 3 correct = 67% accuracy); she did not require prompting on any question (100% independence).
- In May, she answered all 3 questions correctly on the first try (100% accuracy) and did not require prompting on any question (100% independence).

The following table shows these percentages:

	Sep 26	Nov 15	Feb 02	March 30	May 13
Accuracy	0%	0%	33%	67%	100%
Independence	0%	33%	67%	100%	100%

It is now easy to transfer this data to the form required by Massachusetts.



As you can see, if you cannot submit your Stages Report Wizard reports as is, you may be able to provide the data from your saved Stages report files in a different format to satisfy your state's requirements for alternate assessment.

We are interested to hear how you use Stages and/or Stages Report Wizard data in your learners' alternate assessment portfolios. If you need assistance in using Stages to comply with your state's alternate assessment requirements, we'd be happy to try to help. If you provide us with all the details, we'll take a look to see what might be possible. Please send your stories or assessment requirement details to Stages-solutions@stagesnetwork.org.